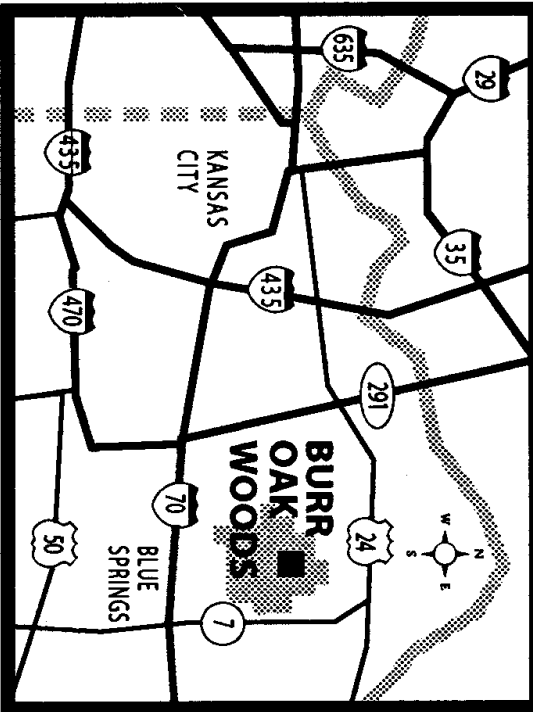


LEARN MORE ABOUT BURR OAK WOODS  
BY VISITING OUR WEBSITE AT:  
[WWW.BURROAKWOODS.ORG](http://WWW.BURROAKWOODS.ORG)



BURR OAK WOODS CONSERVATION NATURE CENTER is located one mile north of I-70 on Hwy 7, one mile west on Park Road. The Nature Center is open Monday through Saturday 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM and noon to 5:00 PM on Sundays. **Area Hours: 8:00AM to 5:00PM.** No pets allowed. There is no admission fee. **Phone: 816-228-3766**

## *The Nutshell*

BURR OAK WOODS CONSERVATION NATURE CENTER  
MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION  
1401 NW PARK ROAD - BLUE SPRINGS, MO 64015



### *Burr Oak Woods*

#### *Conservation Nature Center*

1401 NW Park Road  
Blue Springs, Missouri 64015

**Phone: 816-228-3766 TDD: 816-655-6268**

Fax: 816-655-6267

#### *NATURE CENTER*

##### *MANAGER*

Lynn Youngblood

#### *NATURALISTS*

Stephanie Acers

Lisa LaCombe

Diane Neal

Shalena View

#### *CLERICAL*

Lauren McCarthy, *Office Supervisor*

Joan Blackmon

Joe Polka

#### *MAINTENANCE*

Wayne Bass, *Lead*

David Bilyeu

Jeremy Jones

#### *NEWSLETTER*

##### *Editors*

Lynn Youngblood

R. Craig Hensley

#### *INTERPRETIVE*

##### *PROGRAM SUPERVISOR*

R. Craig Hensley

Carol Barclay

Sheri Medlock

Jenna Rhodes

Paulette Ozias

Gina Schafer

Rachael Butler

Ed Miller

#### *LAYOUT*

Joan Blackmon

PRSRT.STD.

US POSTAGE PAID

JEFFERSON CITY MO

PERMIT 274



# The Nutshell

Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center  
Volume 18 December 2004 Number 12

## *The Year In Pictures*

*During 2004 the interpretive center at Burr Oak Woods was renovated. Throughout the year, however, we continued to carry out the mission of the Missouri Department of Conservation through programs and special events. As we look forward to a new year we want to thank you for visiting and want to invite you to come again and again in 2005.*



Volunteer-Naturalists spent an awe-inspiring weekend viewing 300,000 sandhill cranes in March.



A new group of volunteers were welcomed to the nature center including Betty Reynolds and her cardinal costume.



This young lady was pleased as punch to share her catch with

Volunteer-Naturalist Jim Hawes.



Naturalist Carol Barclay showed new parents how to bring the natural world to their youngsters during Babes in the Woods.



While we checked out this white-eyed vireo during bird banding, he checked out the camera.



Stream team cleaned up Burr Oak Creek.



Manager Lynn Youngblood joined other MDC staff and volunteers to celebrate Lewis & Clark.



Smoky Bear was a welcomed sight at the Ice Cream Social celebrating the re-opening of the nature center in October.



The Discovery String Band entertained nearly 100 people with music of the Lewis & Clark era.



Storyteller Molly Postlewaite fascinates children and adults with a story from the past at Prairie Day.

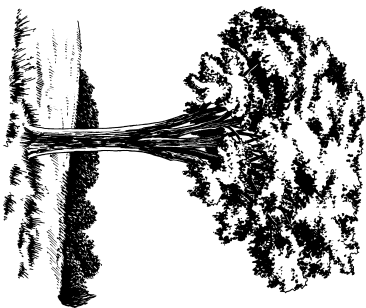


Naturalist Diane Neal helped youngsters release tagged monarchs during Monarch Mania.

## Happy Holidays

*Helping Missourians connect with nature and conserve it, too!*

From the Treetops



On page six of this newsletter you will see a going away tribute to our bright young star, Jenna Rhodes; an intern whom has been sharing her life with us for the past six months. I hope you had a chance to meet Jenna while she's been here. She's absolutely delightful! She has a B.S. in Biology and is getting her Master's degree in Education: Curriculum & Instruction, to become an Environmental Educator because she wants to make a difference in the world. Ah, youth!

The great thing about life is that it's never too late to make a difference in the world! You may have also noticed somewhere on these pages the announcement for a new volunteer naturalist class. Training will begin in January.

In all my years at the nature center, I think the thing that continually amazes me the most is the people that volunteer themselves and their time. They are of all ages, all

backgrounds, and all interests. They come together to give to the nature center, to the Conservation Department, and to you, the general public.

The volunteers are a part of our nature center family. The staff at Burr Oak Woods could not possibly offer all of the programs and special events without the assistance, hard work, and sheer determination of the volunteers.

If you're finding yourself in this gift giving season wanting to give a little more of yourself back to the community, you may only need to look right in your own backyard; look to Burr Oak Woods. You can make a difference in the world...a little piece at a time!



LYNN YOUNGBLOOD  
Nature Center Manager

Critter Corner

Bobcat

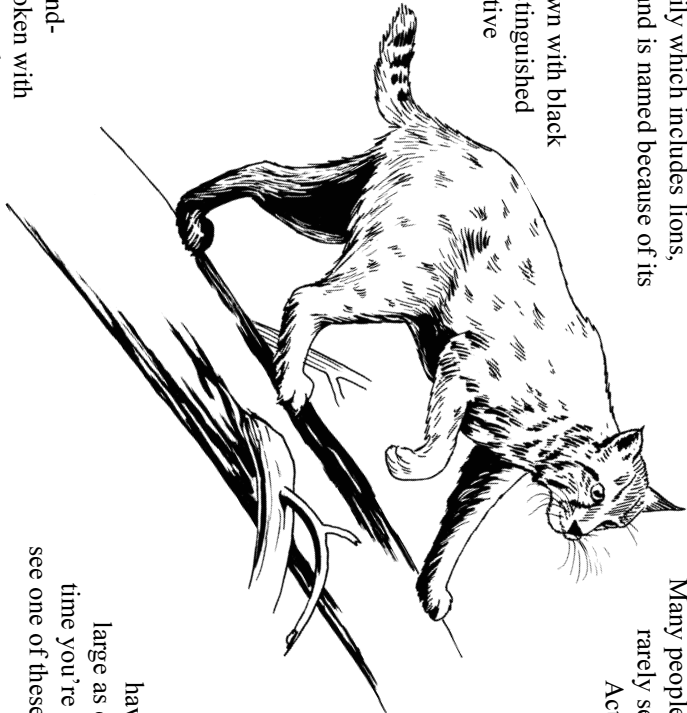
(Lynx rufus)

The bobcat belongs to the Cat Family which includes lions, tigers, pumas, lynxes, and ocelots and is named because of its bobbed tail.

The fur is yellowish to reddish brown with black streaks and spots. The bobcat is distinguished from the domestic cat by its distinctive color patterns, larger size, longer legs, and short or bobbed tail.

The bobcat's growl is often mistaken for a mountain lion; it produces a deep and rough growl or high pitched scream. When captured, it growls, hisses and spits.

Suitable habitats for the bobcat include; heavy forest cover of second-growth timber with underbrush, broken with clearings, rocky outcrops and bluffs, and timbered swamps.



Many people think because bobcats are rarely seen there are few in our state.

Actually, they are plentiful but secretive. Bobcats prefer to hunt at sunrise and sunset.

They do not have a great sense of smell, therefore, they depend on their eyesight and hearing for locating prey. They are strictly carnivores, with rabbits composing the majority of their diet. They also eat mice and other small rodents. Bobcats have the ability to kill animals as large as deer by biting the throat. Next time you're at Burr Oak Woods, you might see one of these elusive animals!

-Sheri Medlock

~ Naturalist Notebook ~

Winter Is . . .

I am a dyed-in-the-wool winter person. I say bring on the snow and cold and don't let up until the bloodroots and spring beauties are bursting at the seams to get above ground.

Sadly, I think I am in the minority. However, before you convince yourself that I have a screw or two loose, let me make my case.

Winter is the sound of snow geese high overhead, their cries echoing through the milky clouds that otherwise obscure their passing.

Winter is a red-tailed hawk, dressed in its western race chocolate chest and belly feathers, watching the dormant weeds and snow for movement of a vole or mouse. Winter is a flurry of activity at bird feeders, chickadees and titmice knifing into a feeder, finding a seed and retreating to the safety of the forest to free the life-giving kernel from its husk.

Winter is a bald eagle resting on the frozen edge of a lake, a fish impaled by talons, lifeless but life-giving. Winter is a story of the deer, fox, turkey and rabbit, recorded by their tracks on the palette of a snow-covered field. Winter

is the brilliant flash of a male northern cardinal as it darts through the bushes. Winter is a walk through a freshly snow-shrouded woodland full of silence and elegant beauty. Winter is a crisp, star-filled night where the low hooting of the great-horned owl signals the beginning of its breeding season.

Winter is also a time of cozy fires, a successful hunt, and a mess of fish pulled up through a hole in the ice. Winter is a time of family get-togethers, celebration and a good bowl of chili. Winter is also a time to reflect on the past year and a time to plan for the future.

And winter is, if nothing else, a time to gain greater appreciation for the spring, summer and fall.

During the next few months, we'll be offering a variety of programs designed to provide opportunities to enjoy the winter season. There is much to be learned and enjoyed when the cold winds blow and snow blankets the ground.

I hope you'll make plans to bundle up and join us for one or more of them. Oh yeah, did I change anyone's mind? Does it at least make you think a little differently? I hope so.

-R. Craig Hensley

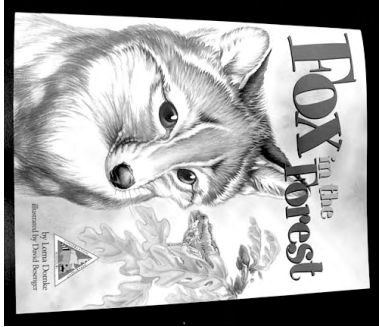
Nature Shop News

December Featured Product

Great Gift Idea  
for Youngsters  
Childrens Book  
Fox in the Forest

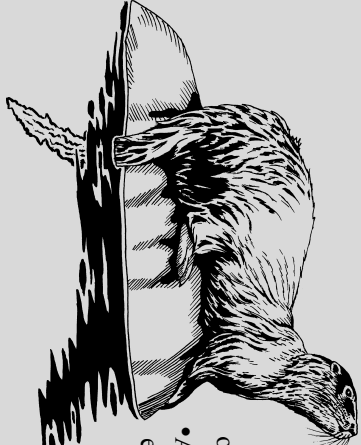
Regular Price \$8.00  
Featured Price \$6.40

Heritage Card Discount  
Does Not Apply



- Natural Happenings -

- Listen for the calls of great horned and barred owls.
- Breeding season is also beginning for river otters, gray squirrels, and red foxes.



- Bald eagles are arriving in Missouri. You can visit them at Squaw Creek Natural Wildlife Refuge north of St. Joseph.
- Animal tracking is made easy after a fresh snow fall. Bundle up and stop by Burr Oak Woods for a track hike.





## Christmas fern

- The Christmas fern is one of 69 species of ferns found in Missouri.
- It is an evergreen fern that is often seen in December throughout the state on moist banks and wooded slopes.
- The fiddlehead or young frond of the Christmas fern emerges in April.
- The fronds of the Christmas fern have tiny pinnae, or small leaflets, that resemble Christmas stockings.
- Pioneers used to make Christmas wreaths from the fronds of this fern.

## Farewell, Jenna



For the past several months we have had the pleasure to work with Jenna Rhodes as our first Naturalist-Intern. Jenna has been an important member of the interpretive staff and has shared her enthusiasm and passion for conservation education with us. In return, we hope that we have given her a well-rounded experience with the Missouri Department of Conservation and Burr Oak Woods, in particular. Jenna will be missed but we know she will be moving on to bigger and even better things.



# Lewis and Clark Journal

The Lewis and Clark Expedition was recorded to have begun on May 14, 1804 when the men left St. Louis and started up the Missouri River. Many people are not aware of the months of preparation and work that came before this historic day. The winter of 1803-1804 was the true beginning of the expedition because it forged the camaraderie that would carry the men through to the Pacific Ocean and back again.

December 12 of 1803, Clark and the crew left Lewis in St. Louis to handle information gathering and logistics. Clark and the men then proceeded another 18 miles upriver to the site of their first winter camp at the mouth of the Wood River on the eastern bank of the Mississippi. Camp Dubois, the crews' home for the next six months, was completed on Christmas Eve of 1803 after several weeks of ice, hail and snow. Do not be misled by the word 'camp' in Camp Dubois. This winter was filled with hard work and multiple tests of strength, perseverance and teamwork.

While at Camp Dubois, Clark had his hands full. He picked and trained team members, made modifications to and armed the keelboat

## Programs at Lake City Range

816-229-4448  
28900 E Argo Road  
Grain Valley, Mo 64029

We are pleased to let people know about several of the programs offered by the Missouri Department of Conservation's Lake City Range. Be sure to call 816-229-4448 to register for these special programs.



## Range Christmas Open House & Family Day Sunday, December 12th, 1:00 - 4:30 p.m.

Join the range staff and volunteers for Eddie Eagle Safety information, cookies, free family shooting, and making ornaments from shotgun shells. No registration is required.

## In the Holiday Spirit

Wednesday, December 15, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

We will make wreaths and decorate them with various shooting and non-shooting items.

Registration is required by calling 816-229-4448.



and pirogues, and gathered and packed supplies. Clark also used this time to ready the men for the long journey that lay ahead. He spent much time drilling the crew over military procedures and marksmanship. He even set up shooting competitions between the locals and his men to encourage their improvement. In the first match-up the locals won, but after spending a winter practicing and honing their skills, the expedition's men earned the prize. Discipline, learning tasks and duties, keeping camp neat and tidy, and properly maintaining and caring for the weapons and equipment occupied the troops' time.

The winter was not void of discovery either. The first new species, the Osage-orange tree, was discovered just across the river from camp.

The time together at Camp Dubois proved to be well-spent. The men were transformed from a group of individuals into a unified team that conquered great odds and unexpected surprises. The accomplishments of this group were made possible by the lessons learned on the banks of the river that cold winter.

-Jenna Rhodes

# Conservation Department to hold Public Forum

*Conservation officials seek public input to improve services and facilities*

Have advice or concerns about conservation in Missouri? Join Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) Director John Hoskins to discuss conservation issues at a public forum in Blue Springs at 7 p.m. on Thursday, December 2.

The Conservation Department is continuing to provide frequent opportunities for citizen input by holding public forums throughout the state. The forums enable the Department of Conservation to learn how the agency can better meet Missourians' needs. During this forum, MDC is particularly interested in learning about the types of public use facilities and services that local residents want. We also welcome your comments on any conservation topic.

The Conservation Department Kansas City Region Forum will be held at the **Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center located at 1401 NW Park Rd. in Blue Springs**. For more information call the Conservation Department Kansas City Regional Office at 816/655-6250.

## We're Looking for a Few Good People

Burr Oak Woods will be starting a new volunteer training class on Tuesday, January 18. Volunteer naturalists perform a variety of functions at the center from assisting with the teaching of our many public and school programs, helping with special events, monitoring bluebird boxes, to assisting in the office and more.

Volunteer candidates must be 18 years of age, successfully complete the 32-hour training program, attend a monthly meeting and be able to commit to and successfully contribute 24 hours of volunteer service to the nature center every two months.

Training sessions, which are mandatory, will be held on Tuesday evenings from 6:30-9:30 p.m. and on three Saturdays from 8 a.m.-Noon.

If you are interested in completing an application for our volunteer program, please call Craig Hensley at 655-6263 ext. 227, or stop by to pick one up.



## Friday, December 3 Lewis and Clark: A Dog's Eye View

Explore the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery through the eyes of Seaman, the first dog to make the journey across the continent.

The *Puppetry Arts Institute* will present a 45-minute puppet show including marionettes of Seaman, Lewis and Clark, York, Sacagawea, and a French trapper, plus hand and shadow puppets. Please call to register. This is sure to be a fun program, it is appropriate for ages 5 year old and up. Please call to register



## Monday, December 6, 7:00 p.m.

## Tree Selection Seminar

Plant the right tree in the right place. This seminar will help you learn about and decide what trees and shrubs to order for spring plantings, windbreak design, layout and tree selection, plantings to benefit wildlife, what trees grow well in your area, which trees will work best for your purpose, and planting to reforest fields. Get your questions answered at our seminar before you order 2004-05 tree seedlings.

## The Month of December

## Donations to Harvesters

Burr Oak Woods is helping to wipe out hunger in the month of December. We are sponsoring a Harvesters food drive here at the nature center to benefit the community. We are hoping to fill two food barrels this month. Any non-perishable food items, such as canned fruits and vegetables, that you can donate are greatly appreciated (no glass please). We invite you to help us meet our goal by donating something each time you visit the nature center.

## Notice: Managed Hunt

**Monday - Wednesday December 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, & 8<sup>th</sup>**  
**The area and trails will be Closed. Visitors are welcome to come and enjoy the Nature Center 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

Program Registration

Please call 816-228-3766 (TDD 816-655-6268) on or after the first of the month to register for the **FREE** programs list. It is important to arrive five minutes before the program time. If you have to cancel, please call as soon as possible so someone on the waiting list can attend

4 Saturday

Deaf and Hard of Hearing: Building for the Birds

What's the most growing hobby in America after gardening? Bird feeding. Now you can join the fun of bird feeding by building your own birdfeeder. It's easy and your feathered neighbors will enjoy it all winter. Please call to register.

Ages: All Ages  
Time: 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

5 Sunday

Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Adults Only:

Harvest Centerpiece

Are you looking for just the right centerpiece for your holiday table? Why not make your own? During this workshop you will make a centerpiece that you will be proud of. Bring your friends! Please call to register.

Ages: Adults Only (18 and up)  
Time: 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Ages: Adults  
Time: 7:00 p.m.

3 Friday

Lewis and Clark:

A Dog's Eye View

See details on page 3. Please call to register.

Ages: Families (children 5 and up)  
Time: 7:00 p.m.



4 Saturday

Tales n' Trails

Lost one of your mittens? Grab your coats and let's head outside to do a little exploring. We'll enjoy the sights and sounds of the winter forest. Afterward, we'll return inside for a cup of hot cocoa and curl up to a beautifully illustrated Ukrainian folktale adapted by Jan Brett entitled *The Mitten* about a little boy who loses his mitten and the animals who find it. Then everyone will make our own mitten full of surprises.

Ages: 5-7  
Time: 10:30 - Noon

Did You Know?

Some animals such as weasels grow white coats in the winter in order to blend in with the snow.

7 Tuesday

Adults Only Craft Day: Holiday Ornaments

What can you make with pine needles, dried flowers, pine cones, twigs, moss, acorns and seed pods? At Burr Oak Woods... LOTS OF THINGS! We will be creating a variety unique holiday ornaments from natural items. Samples of project ideas will be provided, but original ideas are always encouraged! Come see what you can create! Please call to register.

Ages: Adults Only (18 and up)  
Times: 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.  
or 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

8 Wednesday

Adults Only Craft Day:

Candle Making

A holiday dinner by the light of a holiday candle, who could paint a prettier picture? The staff at Burr Oak Woods has many ideas on how to create unique candles with natural items. You can bring candle containers to fill or use our recycled containers. Please call to register.

Ages: Adults Only (18 and up)  
Times: 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.  
or 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

11 Saturday

Nature Nuts:

Who Goes There?

Join us as we discover just who is doing what out in the woods and fields of Burr Oak Woods. We'll become nature sleuths to uncover mysterious footprints, scat and other signs of animal activity. Please be sure to have your child dressed for being outdoors in December. Please call to register.

Ages: 7-10  
Time: 9:30 - 11 a.m.

December & January  
The Art of Conservation  
through Patches

will be on display at  
Burr Oak Woods  
Conservation  
Nature Center

11 Saturday & 12 Sunday

Nature Movie

Does the hectic holiday shopping have you down? Come to the nature center for a relaxing break and pick out a short nature movie to watch while you unwind.

Movies will be shown upon request on a first come first serve bases. 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Saturday and noon to 4:00 p.m. Sunday. **No registration required. All Ages.**

12 Sunday

Naturalist Road Trip:

Squaw Creek

We're heading out onto the wide open road again, this time in search of bald eagles and waterfowl at Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge. Join IPS Craig Hensley for this day-long adventure. Please be sure to bring binoculars, a field guide (will be provided if you don't have them), dress for cold weather and bring a sack lunch. Please call to register as seating is limited.

Ages: Adults (18 and up)  
Time: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

14 Tuesday

Conservation Kid's Club:

The Night Tree

During this holiday season of sharing, how about starting a new family tradition by helping to feed some of the wild animals during Missouri's harsh winter. We will create beautiful treats just for the wildlife of Burr Oak Woods, then head outdoors to decorate the perfect tree with them! Bring a blanket for your family. Dress for the weather. Please call to register.

Age: 7-10  
Time: 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

15 Wednesday

Home School:

Winter Birds

This month we will be into the world of Missouri's winter birds. Join us as we learn about our feathered friends, make bird feeders and meet some live birds up close and personal. Be sure to dress for the weather. Please call to register.

Ages: 3 - 5 or 6 - 8  
Times: 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.  
or 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.  
Ages: 9 - 11 or 12 and up  
Times: 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.  
or 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

Did You Know?

Honeybees cluster together in their hive during winter and even take turns being the colder one on the outside of the group.

18 Saturday

Bird in the Hand



Join us for an up-close look at the songbirds that visit the birdfeeding station at Burr Oak Woods. We'll be capturing, identifying, banding and releasing songbirds, from juncos and chickadees to downy woodpeckers and goldfinches. And, thanks to the generous support of Antoine Seed Co., the birds won't be the only ones feasting at the feeders. Antoine's will provide donuts, muffins and juice for early birds, the human kind that is. No registration is required for this hands-on, educational program.

Ages: Families (children 3 and up)  
Time: 9:00 a.m. - Noon

18 Saturday

Kids Craft Day

The leaves have fallen, the air is crisp, it's time for Burr Oaks Woods annual holiday KIDS CRAFT DAY! This is a wonderful opportunity for youngsters to make some special holiday gifts to give to loved ones. We will have examples and supplies available for six crafts suitable for a variety of ages. Crafters are also invited to wrap each of their creations. Come make this part of your family holiday traditions. Please call to register.

Ages: All Ages  
Time: 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

19 Sunday

Winter Wildlife

Not everything sleeps during the winter! Come out to Burr Oak Woods as we search for the many clues that tell us there is winter wildlife out there. We will look for tracks, homes, and maybe even the real thing! Dress for the weather. Please call to register.

Ages: Families  
Time: 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.

